

CLAIMS:

1. For use in conjunction with a video encoding/decoding technique wherein images are encoded into frame-representative bitstreams that include start codes and variable length codes and at least some of said bitstreams are truncated for streaming, ultimately, to a decoder for decoding; a method comprising the steps of:

selecting an end code having a value that is different than any start code and any variable length code of said bitstreams; and

appending said end code to said bitstreams.

2. The method as defined by claim 1, further comprising decoding the streamed encoded bit streams.

3. The method as defined by claim 2, wherein said decoding of the bitstream includes interpreting said end code, or a portion thereof, as an invalid symbol that cannot be decoded.

4. The method as defined by claim 3, wherein said decoding of the bitstream includes initiating a process of looking for the next start code after an invalid symbol has occurred.

5. The method as defined by claim 1, wherein said end code is a string of zeros.

6. The method as defined by claim 2, wherein said end code is a string of zeros.

7. The method as defined by claim 3, wherein said end code is a string of zeros.

8. The method as defined by claim 4, wherein said end code is a string of zeros.

9. The method as defined by claim 1, wherein said start code is a string of zeros followed by a one, and said end code is another string of zeros longer than the string of zeros of said start code.

10. The method as defined by claim 2, wherein said start code is a string of zeros followed by a one, and said end code is another string of zeros longer than the string of zeros of said start code.

11. The method as defined by claim 3, wherein said start code is a string of zeros followed by a one, and said end code is another string of zeros longer than the string of zeros of said start code.

12. The method as defined by claim 4, wherein said start code is a string of zeros followed by a one, and said end code is another string of zeros longer than the string of zeros of said start code.

13. The method as defined by claim 2, wherein said decoding is performed without looking for a specific end code symbol.

14. The method as defined by claim 3, wherein said decoding is performed without looking for a specific end code symbol.

15. The method as defined by claim 12, wherein said decoding is performed without looking for a specific end code symbol.

16. The method as defined by claim 1, wherein said truncated bitstreams are MPEG-4 fine granularity scaling codes.

17. The method as defined by claim 3, wherein said truncated bitstreams are MPEG-4 fine granularity scaling codes.

18. The method as defined by claim 12, wherein said truncated bitstreams are MPEG-4 fine granularity scaling codes.

19. For use in conjunction with a video encoding/decoding technique wherein images are encoded into frame-representative bitstreams that include start codes and variable length codes and at least some of said bitstreams are truncated for streaming, ultimately, to a decoder for decoding; and apparatus comprising:

means for selecting an end code having a value that is different than any start code and any variable length code of said bitstreams; and

means for appending said end code to said bitstreams.

20. Apparatus as defined by claim 1, further comprising means for decoding the streamed encoded bit streams.